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## Isn't This The Carpenter's Son? Aren't His Brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Jude?

### Matthew 13:54-58 and Mark 6:1-6a

Isn't this the carpenter's son **DIG**: Aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Jude? How did the Nazarenes treat Christ months earlier? What do they think they "know" about Him? How does this impede His ministry? What changed between His initial reception and this one? If they asked the right questions, why didn't they get the right answers? How do we know James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude were not Christ's cousins or brothers in the Lord?

**REFLECT:** What does this teach us about assuming that we all "know" about Yeshua? What relationship does our faith have with Jesus' ability to be at work in our lives? Why does He look to faith?

**Jesus left Peter's house** in Capernaum **and went to His hometown** of Nazareth, **accompanied by His talmidim (Mark 6:1)**. It almost seems as if the departure of **the Lord** from Capernaum marked a crisis in the history of that small Jewish town. From then on it ceased to be the headquarters for **Messiah's** earthly ministry, and was only visited occasionally as **He** passed through. Indeed, the concentration and growing power of pharisaic opposition, and the proximity of Herod's residence at Tiberias would have made a permanent stay there impossible at this stage of **His** ministry. But, from this time on, **the Son of Man** would have **no place to lay His head (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58)**.<sup>759</sup>

**Yeshua Messiah** was in the middle of a life-changing two-day period. Just the day before **He** had been accused of being demon possessed and rejected by the Great Sanhedrin, **He** pronounced a judgment on that particular Jewish generation, and began speaking to the people in parables. This day had begun at night with **Him** calming the storm, and healing two demon-possessed men. Then, after sunrise, **He** raised Jairus' daughter, and healed a sick woman. Later **He** healed two blind

men and a deaf mute. It was time to go home.

Months earlier when **He** revealed **His** true identity as the long-awaited **Messiah** in **His** hometown **synagogue** they tried to kill **Him** (**to see link click Ch - The Spirit of the LORD is One Me**). But, in the interval of **His** absence some changes *should have* come in the feeling and attitude of the Nazarenes toward **Him**. After all, **He** had been the carpenter of **the town**, taking the place of the deceased Joseph. So, after nine or ten months **He** had come back to them in totally different circumstances. They could not deny **His** Godliness of **His** presence, the wisdom of **His** words or the power of **His** miracles. Yet, they could not accept the change.<sup>760</sup>

**When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue (Mark 6:2a). The people** there were essentially the same **ones** who had been there for many years – but, **Jesus** was not the same. The main object of **the synagogue** was the teaching of the people. The teaching part of the service consisted mainly of reading a section from the Torah, then the prophets, which was then taught. It seems that when the ruler of **the synagogue** invited **Him to teach** from the Torah, **He** could not resist the opportunity.

**And many who heard Him were amazed (Mark 6:2c).** The verb is *ekplesso*, meaning *to strike out, to drive out, to strike one out of self-defense*. The teaching and miracles of our **Lord** struck them so forcefully that they were to the point of losing control of themselves. The verb is imperfect, showing that this condition of being beside themselves with **amazement** continued for some time. In short, they were completely stunned.

**“Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles” (Mattityahu 13:54 and 56b; Mark 6:2c)!** To **their** credit **they** were asking the right questions. The tragedy was that **they** asked the right questions with the wrong attitude. **Their** attitude was, “Who does **He** think **He** is anyway?” Familiarity had bred contempt that gave birth to unbelief. Nazareth was a microcosm of the nation as a whole.<sup>761</sup> **Jesus** had been rejected in Nazareth previously, but, this was **His** final rejection.

**They** asked mockingly: **Isn't this the carpenter's son?** The language implies that the answer should be a simple “Yes.” The real answer, however, is not so simple. **Luke's** language was crafted very carefully: **He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat (Luke 3:23b).**

**Joseph the carpenter** raised **Yeshua** and accepted **Him** as his son even though **he** had no natural human father, since **God the Holy Spirit** impregnated Miryam the virgin supernaturally. But, to the Nazarenes, **Yeshua** was just too ordinary. **He** was just **the carpenter's son**.

**Is not His mother called Mary? Miryam** was a woman of extraordinary godliness, but, **she** was no more divine than any other woman ever born, and certainly is not superior to **Christ** as Catholic dogma maintains (see [Ey - Jesus' Mother and Brothers](#)). **She** even referred to **the Lord** as **God my Savior** (see [An - The Song of Mary](#)), affirming **her** own sinfulness and need of salvation.

**And His brothers, James** (see **Galatians 1:19**), **Joseph, Simon and Jude** (**Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3a NASB**)? **Jesus** had **brothers**, which means that after **He** was born, **Mary** had at least six more children. The four **brothers** listed here and at least two **sisters**. The Roman Catholic Church attempts to explain **these** away as *cousins*, and therefore not children of Joseph and **Miryam** at all. But, the Greek has another word that means *cousin*, *anepsios*, as in **Colossians 4:10: Mark, the cousin of Barnabas**. The mention of **His mother** and father in the immediate context shows this is immediate family, not distant cousins.

Neither are **they** “brothers in **the Lord**.” The Greek word for **brother** here is *adelphos*. It can be used for a physical **brother** or a **brother in the Lord**, with context determining which should be used. For example in **First Corinthians 15:6** we learn the **Yeshua appeared to more than five hundred brothers** (*adelphos*). *That* context would obviously be **brothers in the Lord**. Some contend these are spiritual brothers or cousins, but they have to take that out of context. If you want to pull things out of context you can use the Bible to prove anything you want to prove. The context *here*, however, is **mother**, father, **brothers** and **sisters**. In other words, immediate family. No mention of aunts, uncles or cousins in the context here.

**Aren't all his sisters here with us (Mattityahu 13:56a; Mark 6:3b)?** From this text and numerous others (**Matthew 12:46-47; Luke 2:7; John 7:10; Acts 1:14**), it is clear the **Mary** did not live in perpetual virginity, as the Roman Catholic heresy claims. **She** was a virgin when **God the Holy Spirit** impregnated **her**. But, afterward, **Mary** had normal sexual relations with **her** husband Joseph and **they** had a family together. Whether the inspired Gospel writers used the masculine *adelphos* for **brother**, or the feminine *adelphē* for **sister**, they both have the same root, and mean *from the same womb*.<sup>762</sup>



**And they took offense at Him (Matthew 13:57a; Mark 6:3c).** While multitudes throughout Judea and Galilee and even the regions beyond had accepted **Yeshua's** word as that of a prophet because of the miracles **He** did, it seems like the village of Nazareth was totally unresponsive.<sup>763</sup> A Nazarene was not supposed to know **all** those **things**. Nazareth was such a small town that even the Nazarenes themselves, like other Galileans, did not expect a great prophet to come from their midst (**John 1:46**). Any one from there was supposed to be the lowest of the low. They could not explain **Him** so they rejected **Him**. The saddest part of all was that **His** own **brothers and sisters**, the sons and daughters of **Mary** and Joseph, did not believe **His** messianic claims until after **His** death and resurrection. **They** had lived in the same home with **Yeshua** for many years, but, it made no impression on **them**.

Like the Pharisees and Torah-teachers, **the people** of Nazareth refused to make the logical and obvious connection between **His** power and **His** divinity because **they** willfully refused to believe. The seed of the Gospel fell on the hard-packed soil of sin-loving hearts into which **God's** truth could not penetrate (see **Et - The Parable of the Soils**). As **Yeshua** had explained to Nicodemus: **Whoever believes in [the Son of God] is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but the people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed (Yochanan 3:18-20).**

**Those** who heard and saw **Messiah** did not reject **Him** for lack of evidence - but in spite of overwhelming evidence. **They** did not reject **Him** because **they** lacked the truth - but because **they** rejected **the Truth**. **They** refused forgiveness because **they** loved **their** sins more than **they** loved **Him**. **They** denied the light because **they** preferred darkness. The reason for rejecting **the Lord** has always been that

**people** prefer **their** own way to **His**.<sup>764</sup>

**But Jesus said to them: Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor (Matthew 13:57b; Mark 6:4).** This proved to be true. It is significant here that **Jesus** made a definite claim to being a **prophet**. **He** had already claimed to be the Jewish **Messiah (John 4:26; Luke 4:21), the Son of Man** with the power of **God (Matthew 9:6; Mark 1:10; Luke 5:24), and the Son of God (John 5:22).**

**But He did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith, except lay His hands on a few sick people and heal them.** At that time **Jesus** was only performing individual miracles based on **faith**. But, **the people** of Nazareth were so consistently unbelieving that **they** would not even bring **their** sick to **Him** to be healed. **And He was amazed at their lack of faith (Mattityahu 13:58; Mark 6:5-6a).** The fact that our omniscient **Lord was amazed** at the unbelief of **the people** of Nazareth, gives us some understanding of **His** human limitations. As **God, He** would not be **amazed** at anything. Yet, in **His** humanity, **He** seemingly expected a different reception at Nazareth than **He** received.

**Jesus** must have been sad and disappointed as **He** went down the valley toward the plain of Esdraelon and looked back for the last time on **His** native town. Humanly, **He** needed **their** friendship and moral support as **He** faced **His** ministry in Galilee and **His** destiny in the City of David. But, in reality, **they** needed **Him** more than **He** needed **them**. **They** had sadly lost **their** last opportunity to have **Him**.

**Faith** calls for obedience to **God**. As we obey **Him** out of love, **God** can work in our lives. **Jesus** told **His** apostles: **If you love Me, keep my commands (Yochanan 14:15).** When we believe or have **faith**, we put ourselves under **ADONAI** and submit to **Him**.

To be obedient to **God's** Word, we have to trust and hope in **Him**. In **Hebrews 11**, the writer gave example after example of the holy men and women in the TaNaKh who because of their **faith**, persevered in following **the Lord**, trusting that **His** Word was reliable. They could place their hope in **God**, knowing that **He** would be true to all **His** promises.

Obedience, trust, and hope are essential parts of **faith**. When confronted by **Jesus'**



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words and deeds, **the people** of Nazareth did not believe. Since **they** would not submit to **Christ** and obey **Him**, and since they had no trust in **Him**, **He** could not work among them. Let us pray that we will believe in **Jesus** and will experience **His** presence and work in our lives.

***Yeshua**, increase in me my faith. Enable me to place my trust and hope in **the Father** and obey **Your Word. Spirit**, I want to know the power of **ADONAI** in my life. I believe, I want to believe - please help my unbelief.<sup>765</sup>*